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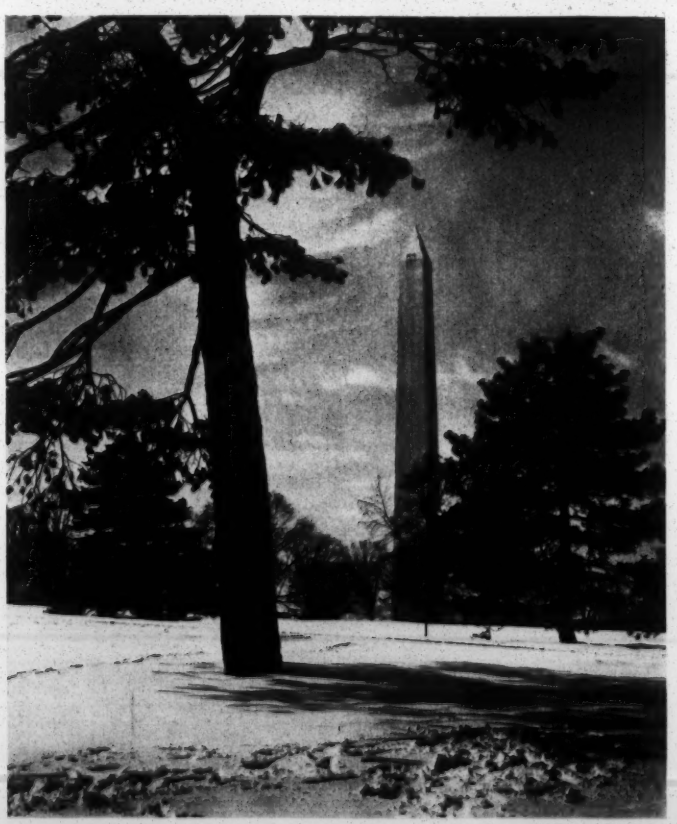
THE BULLETINS WILL NOT APPEAR DURING THE HOLIDAYS. NEXT ISSUE WILL BE JANUARY 8, 1951.



EDWIN L. WISHERD

THE "MAGNIFICENT DISTANCES" OF THE NATION'S CAPITAL GLEAM IN WINTER'S SNOW

Evergreens of the Mall frame the Washington Monument. Near here, on the south lawn of the White House, the President customarily lights the National Christmas Tree (Bulletin No. 4).

Bulletin No. 1, December 18, 1950

Yalu, Korea Border River, Moves Much Timber

THE winding Yalu River forms three-fifths of the boundary between Korea and Manchuria and its watershed normally is noted for a heavy traffic in timber, not troops. The first 30 miles of its course, in the highest of Manchuria's Chang Pai Shan (mountains), lie entirely within that Chinese state. Then it takes up its border duties for 450 miles southwestward through forested hills to Korea Bay of the Yellow Sea.

The Yalu's workaday job of rafting rough timber down to the sea (illustration, next page) has been interrupted by the war in Korea and by communist China's intervention. But this is not the first time. The Yalu made headlines in newspapers of the Western world 45 years ago when Japanese forces crossed it to begin their surprise victory campaign in the Russo-Japanese War (1904-05).

Ice Ties up Traffic in Winter

Many modern industries have developed along the Yalu some 15 miles from its mouth. At the point where the cities of Antung, Manchuria, and Sinuiju, Korea, face each other across the river, lumber, paper, iron, and other mills line both shores. Sinuiju is reported virtually wiped out by heavy bombing.

The river at this point is nearly 3,000 feet wide and its channel is 12 feet deep at average low tide. In summer, ships of as much as 1,000 tons capacity can navigate the channel upstream to Antung and Sinuiju. From late November until early April the thermometer stays below 32 degrees. The river is frozen solid except at its wide salt-water mouth, where the two cities have each developed a deeper port-suburb. A rail spur joins Sinuiju with Yongampo, 12 miles down the Korean shore, while Tatung is the newly expanded port-addition to Antung.

A 12-span steel railroad bridge on stone piers joins Antung and Sinuiju. It was called the greatest in all Asia when it was built early in the 20th century. It is 3,098 feet long. Two eight-foot sidewalks on each side of the bridge tracks were credited with a large part in aiding Koreans and Manchus to understand each other. The bridge has become a target for United Nations air strikes.

Small Boats Could Travel 400 Miles

Industrialization of the area, started by the 1920's, has greatly increased in the last 20 years. A decade ago, Antung had 315,000 inhabitants, while Sinuiju's population numbered more than 50,000.

The Hun River, flowing from Manchuria into the upper end of the big Suiho Reservoir, is the largest tributary of the Yalu. In prewar days small power boats and junks carrying as much as eight tons could ply the Yalu for 120 or more miles upstream, even above the Hun junction. Lighter junks made use of 400 miles of the river's length. However, a series of power dams has restricted cargo traffic on the upper stream.

ENTERED AS SECOND CLASS MATTER APRIL 27, 1943, POST OFFICE, WASHINGTON, D. C., UNDER ACT OF MARCH 3, 1879.
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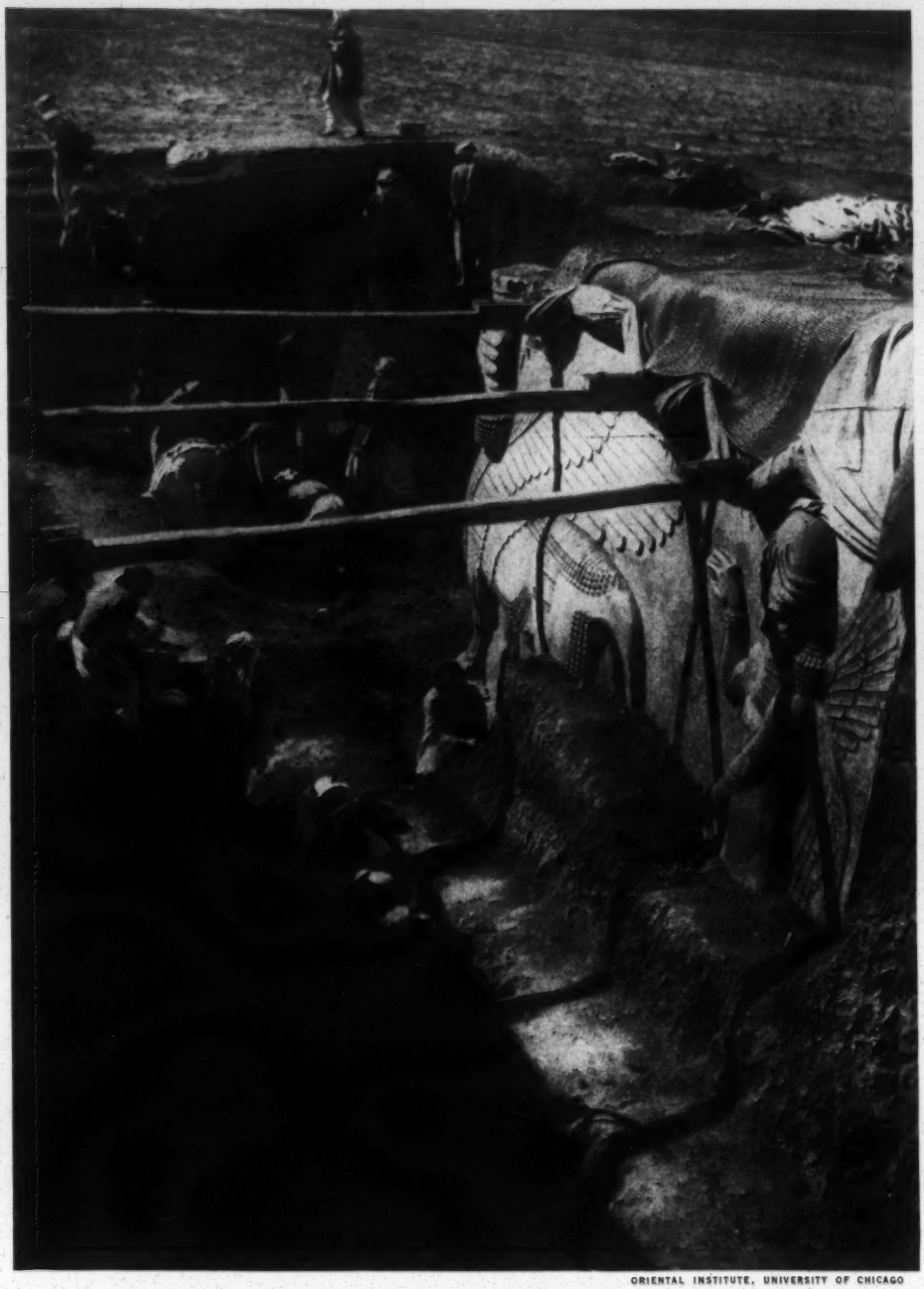

ORIENTAL INSTITUTE, UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

WHEN IRAQ'S DESERT WAS THE GRANARY OF THE WORLD, GRATEFUL KINGS CARVED WINGED BULLS

Now covered by dry sand, the figure is excavated by workmen who carefully avoid scratching its soft alabaster sides. The bull guarded the palace of Sargon II, King of Assyria when the Tigris-Euphrates valley was a sea of green crops from north to south—2,600 years ago (Bulletin No. 5).

Bulletin No. 2, December 18, 1950

Silver Find Adds Chapter to Viking Story

THE discovery of a 1,000-year-old silver hoard in excavations at Trondheim, Norway, brings to light new details for the gradually unfolding story of life in Viking times.

It is expected that this latest find will provide new clues to the far-flung routes of conquest and trade followed by Scandinavia's dreaded sea warriors. The treasure includes old Arabic and German coins, pieces minted by 11th-century King Canute, and two silver crucifixes.

Viking Age Was Time of Terror

Archeologists already have accumulated a great deal of information on the character and exploits of the Vikings. From burial mounds, ancient homesites, and military camps excavated on Baltic islands, in Scandinavia, Britain, and neighboring regions, have come revealing relics of ships, arms, work tools, and household goods (illustration, next page). Ornaments, money, church treasures, and other valuable articles obtained through plunder or trade long ago often have been found with them.

The term "Viking age" is usually applied to the period between the 9th and 11th centuries when raids by the Scandinavian sea rovers were terrorizing all Europe. Authorities trace three main invasion channels, although routes often crossed and merged.

The Swedish Vikings sailed their dragon-prowed ships across the Baltic and ravaged northeastern Europe, reaching deep into Russia, and beyond. The Danish raiders swarmed over the North Sea to Britain, into France, Germany, and even the Mediterranean. Norway's Vikings, too, scourged the Mediterranean, continental Europe, and the British Isles. These bold sailors and settlers reached the New World centuries before Columbus was born. It is now generally accepted that Norsemen, led by Leif Ericson about the year 1,000, set up temporary settlements on what they called Vinland, somewhere along North America's eastern coast.

Norse Origin of Some Relics Disputed

Many objects discovered in the northern region of the Middle West and other parts of the United States have been attributed to the Vikings. One, the "Kensington stone," with ancient runic characters and the date 1362, was found near Kensington, Minnesota, in 1898.

The round tower at Newport, Rhode Island, is another famous relic. Long believed to be an 11th-century Norse church, recent research suggests that it may be merely a windmill of colonial times. A collection of weapons in an Ontario, Canada, museum (found near Lake Superior and long considered authentic Viking remains) is the subject of controversy. It is now suspected that the arms may have been brought to the New World at a relatively recent date.

Today's students of the Viking era are particularly grateful for the old seafarers' custom of burying important personages in real ships outfitted with the comforts and utilities of their period. Three outstanding examples of such graves have been unearthed in Norway at various times. One

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The smuggling of merchandise and immigrants across the Yalu are peacetime evils. Activity along this line increases during the long winter freeze of the border waterway. During the wet season which follows the April thaw, timber rafts in an endless procession are the Yalu's most characteristic sight.

In winter woodsmen fell the trees—spruce, fir, larch, and pine. They are cut into eight-foot lengths and bound in units of eight. As many as 100 units are loosely joined into one raft. Drifting 300 or more miles downstream, the raftsman builds a small hut for his home on the 60- to 80-day journey. He may even grow a miniature vegetable garden aboard.

NOTE: The Yalu River is shown on the National Geographic Society's map of Japan and Korea. Write the Society's headquarters, Washington 6, D. C., for a price list of maps.

For further information, see "Roaming Korea South of the Iron Curtain," in the *National Geographic Magazine* for June, 1950; "With the U. S. Army in Korea," June, 1947; "In Manchuria Now," March, 1947; "Jap Rule in the Hermit Kingdom," October, 1945*; "Chosen—Land of Morning Calm," October, 1933; "Here in Manchuria," February, 1933; and "Manchuria, Promised Land of Asia," October, 1929. *(Issues marked with an asterisk are included on a special list of Magazines available to teachers in packets of ten for $1.00; issues unmarked are 50¢ a copy.)*

See also in the GEOGRAPHIC SCHOOL BULLETINS, November 13, 1950, "Korea Northlands Are Rugged and Remote"; "Korea Action Geared to Summer Monsoon's End," October 16, 1950; and "War Engulfs Korea's 'Land of Morning Calm,'" October 2, 1950.

COURTESY SOUTH MANCHURIA RAILWAY

WHERE IT FLOWS PAST ANTUNG, THE YALU RIVER IS CLOTTED WITH LUMBER RAFTS

Piles of logs and firewood cover the beach. Quonset-like huts on rafts shelter the navigators on the long float from the wooded upriver regions. The Yalu should not be confused with China's much longer Yellow (Hwang) River. Both empty into the Yellow Sea, the Yellow's mouth being 450 miles southwest of the Yalu's.

New Truck Express to Start at Bordeaux

A NEW "Red Ball" express, like that which made headlines and victories during World War II, is looming again for France. A major starting point will be the port of Bordeaux. There a United States military depot is being set up to make sure that American arms and supplies are kept moving toward Western Germany and West European defense forces.

The Red Ball tag for urgent transport originated in American railroad slang. It grew out of the practice of marking high-priority freight cars with a red dot, indicating the right to "whistle through anything."

Had No Share in 1944 Red Ball Express

After the Allied assault on the Normandy beaches in 1944, and the breakthrough that drove the Germans eastward, the most pressing problem facing the Allies was an effective supply line.

The question was solved by the famous day-and-night service of the Red Ball trucks. With fuel, food, and ammunition, these speedy vehicles raced along a circular one-way traffic route between invasion ports and the ever-receding battle zones.

Bordeaux, in southwest France, was off the main track of the Red Ball express that whizzed through northern France in 1944. Sixty miles from the Atlantic, near the head of the Gironde estuary, this important and historic seaport suffered far less from the devastation of war than did many other French ports.

When the last remnants of German troops finally quit Bordeaux, however, they thoroughly blocked the harbor by sinking there a score of iron-laden vessels. It was not until 1948 that the last of the debris was removed from the clogged channel and major ocean-going liners could once again reach the port.

Shipyards Turning Out New Craft for Increased Trade

Today, bustling Bordeaux—backed by improved harbor facilities and served by rail and road transport—is reported doing business as usual. Its import-export trade, amounting to 5,000,000 tonnage before the war, is growing, aided by Marshall Plan (European Recovery Program) shipments of coal, wheat, oil, and chemicals.

Commerce in the wines of the region, which have made the name Bordeaux familiar around the world, is flourishing again (illustration, next page). Bordeaux shipbuilding yards are turning out new vessels and the massive bomb-proof submarine base once used by the Germans is the scene of brisk repair work.

Geographically, Bordeaux is especially favored for the international role it has been chosen to fill. Close to the open Atlantic on trade routes with West Africa and North and South America, it has the added advantage of being more difficult for an enemy to blockade from the east than north European ports.

But Bordeaux's civic authorities are not only looking forward to the expected increases in shipping. They also expect the city to take part in

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of these burial ships, left in the condition in which it was found, is now displayed in an Oslo museum. The others have been carefully repaired.

These ships contained the skeletons of their owners, including a Norse queen. Such significant relics as kitchen and eating utensils, iron tools, beds, clothing, games, swords and shields, were part of their cargo. There was even a four-wheeled cart, plus saddles, ropes, and chains for a number of horses and dogs apparently slain for the burials.

NOTE: Denmark, Norway, and Sweden (Viking lands) are shown on the Society's map of Europe and the Near East.

See also, "Baltic Cruise of the *Caribee*," in the *National Geographic Magazine* for November, 1950; "2,000 Miles Through Europe's Oldest Kingdom," February, 1949; "Norway Cracks Her Mountain Shell," August, 1948*; "Norway, An Active Ally," March, 1943*; "Rural Sweden Through American Eyes," June, 1940; "On Danish By-Lanes," January, 1940; "Life's Flavor on a Swedish Farm," September, 1939; "Country Life in Norway," April, 1939; "Royal Copenhagen," February, 1932; "Viking Life in the Storm-Cursed Faeroes," November, 1930; and "Norway, A Land of Stern Reality," July, 1930. (For other articles on Scandinavia, refer to the *Cumulative Index to the National Geographic Magazine* in your school or public library.)

DONALD MC LEISH

WELL-PRESERVED HOUSEHOLD GEAR OF THE VIKINGS ATTRACTS VISITORS TO BERGEN MUSEUM

Bowls with double dragon handles reflect the Viking love of the sea. Their unique design echoes the lines of the dragon-prowed ships in which the Scandinavian sea rovers fared forth to the New World a thousand years ago. The sturdy chair (right) was carved from a section of a tree trunk.

Bulletin No. 4, December 18, 1950

National Christmas Trees Light up

PRESIDENT TRUMAN plans to burn his yule log at Blair House for the second successive year while the near-by White House undergoes extensive repairs. But on Christmas Eve, as usual, his schedule calls for him to officiate at the National Christmas Tree lighting on the White House south lawn or other appropriate place.

Thousands have witnessed the annual ceremonies symbolizing good will among men. They normally take place at five p.m. on December 24 in the shadow of the Washington Monument (illustration, cover). The custom started in 1923 when President Coolidge dedicated a large tree from Vermont, his native state.

New York Claims First Community Tree

The Ellipse, south of the White House grounds, was the tree site in 1923, and has been several times since. Lafayette Square, north of the Executive Mansion, served in the middle 1930's. Since 1941, however, two large living evergreens on the south lawn of the White House have alternated as the national yuletide symbol.

In parks and public squares from coast to coast an ever-increasing number of community trees annually glow with the Christmas spirit. New York claims to have been the nation's first city to hold a community celebration around a tree. No doubt the two largest trees anywhere used for yuletide ceremonies are in Kings Canyon National Park, California, and at Wilmington, North Carolina.

On Christmas Day, 1925, the famous General Grant sequoia was dedicated as the Nation's Christmas Tree. It stands 64 miles east of Fresno in what now is known as the General Grant Grove Section of Kings Canyon National Park. When Sierra Nevada snows allow, many visitors attend Christmas noon exercises at its base. The giant tree is 267 feet high, 40 feet thick at its base, and is estimated to be 3,000 years old.

An infant by comparison is Wilmington's 75-foot live oak on the banks of the Cape Fear River. First lighted in 1929, this 250-year-old monarch takes on its Christmas-tree aspect from festoons of Spanish moss and 3,000 colorful electric bulbs. Nightly Christmas programs are held under its far-spreading boughs.

Fact and Legend Mix

Among newer Christmas customs is the lighted living tree on front lawns, making a night wonderland of countless areas. The business of growing and supplying millions of cut trees brings off-season profit to northern farmers and woodsmen from coast to coast. One Minnesota grower markets close to a million trees a year.

Fact and legend mix in accounts of the origin of the Christmas tree and its progress among Christian peoples. Druids used evergreens in their tree worship long before the first Noel.

On the night of Christ's birth, the legend persists, all trees bloomed and bore fruit at the same time. Henry Van Dyke's story of *The First*

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such industries as oil refining, wood-pulp operations, and nitrate making, which have been proposed for the area in line with the Marshall Plan program for productive investment.

Ambitious, modern Bordeaux has a history which goes back beyond Roman times. Along with the surrounding country, it was ruled by England between the 12th and 15th centuries. Lafayette sailed from Bordeaux to aid the colonists in the American Revolution. And three times in the history of France—during the Franco-Prussian War (1870-1871), World War I, and again in 1940—Bordeaux was emergency host to a refugee French government. Bordeaux's most recent population figures give the city nearly 260,000 inhabitants.

NOTE: Bordeaux may be located on the Society's map of Western Europe.

For additional information, see "Across the Midi in a Canoe," in the *National Geographic Magazine* for August, 1927.

See also, in the GEOGRAPHIC SCHOOL BULLETINS for February 7, 1949, "Bordeaux Still Thrives on Wine Industry."

MELVILLE CHATER

A WINE-LADEN BARGE LOCKS THROUGH THE CANAL ON ITS WAY TO THE SEAPORT

From a few miles up the Garonne above Bordeaux, the Garonne Latéral Canal follows the river to Toulouse where it joins the Canal du Midi. Through sunny vineyards which produce the chief cargoes for its barges, the waterway flows through southwest France, joining Atlantic and Mediterranean. For centuries, Bordeaux's wine merchants could not make up their minds which of their many wines should be honored with the name of their historic city. In 1911 the French government decreed that only wines made from grapes grown within the Gironde Département should be called Bordeaux wines. The political division takes its name from the Gironde, the wide tidewater estuary into which the Garonne flows just below Bordeaux.

TEACHERS! Do you leaf aimlessly through your *National Geographic Magazines*, looking for that article on Greece, those color pictures of Guatemalan costumes? Save time. Order the Cumulative Index, 1899-1949 inclusive. $2.50.

Bulletin No. 5, December 18, 1950

Iraq's Past Is a Blueprint for Its Future

THE cradle of Western civilization is slowly beginning to rock again.

The land of Iraq—whose ancient cultures embraced lawmaking, letters, philosophy, the arts, and mathematics—now is pushing ambitious plans for development; plans which are designed to improve the lot of a people whose nation enjoyed a higher standard of living some 5,000 years ago than it does today.

Oil to Pay for Water

From that distant day until the present one, the life, fortunes, and advancement of this Middle East region have depended largely on the proper management of its two famous but capricious rivers, the Tigris and the Euphrates. Their waters, controlled and channeled into irrigation canals, turned the hot, dry lands into gardens when Iraq was known as Babylonia, Assyria (illustration, inside cover), and Mesopotamia.

Today, the record of the past is Iraq's dream of the future. To harness the rivers for irrigation, flood control, and electricity, Iraq has assigned by law the whole of its sizable oil income, scheduled to reach an annual $5,000,000 by 1955. Additional aid for the program has come from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development in a $12,800,000 loan.

Iraq is both immensely rich and tragically poor. Its 4,500,000 people are estimated to have a lower per capita income than any of the neighboring Arab lands. Without proper irrigation they have been able to cultivate only one-fifth of their country's 116,000 square miles, and without flood control they have seen much of their ripening crops yearly devastated by floods.

Yet Iraq's oil resources are among the largest in the Middle East. Estimates place its petroleum reserves, only partially tapped to date, at six billion barrels. Its soil is known to be fertile and productive, provided it is watered.

Blazed During Dark Ages

Even on his present meager farm lands, the Iraqi farmer produces 80 per cent of the dates sold on the international market. Other crops that do well along river banks or in irrigated patches are wheat, barley, rice, tobacco, and long-staple cotton. Livestock is a leading source of income, especially in the Kurdish mountains of Iraq's north. The nation claims an estimated 15,000,000 head of sheep and goats.

Historically, Iraq is a nation of many lives. During man's earliest days on earth, successive civilizations along the Tigris and Euphrates rose and fell, building and destroying the famous cities of Ur, Nippur, Kish, Babylon, Nineveh, and Eridu. The Golden Age of Iraq began, however, with the Arab conquest of 647 A.D. and lasted more than 500 years.

Under the Abbasid caliphate, the Arab mind, according to one writer, "blazed out with a brilliance second only to that of the Greeks during their best period." While western Europe was in its so-called Dark

Christmas Tree popularizes the legend of St. Boniface who, as an English missionary to Germany in the eighth century, replaced the pagan oak used in sacrificing to idols with the fir tree decorated in tribute to Christ.

Another legend holds that Martin Luther, in the early 16th century, cut a snow-bedecked fir on a brilliant starry night and set it up for his children, with candles for stars. In a 1604 manuscript of Strasbourg, Alsace, is the first authentic mention of decorated trees. In any event, Germany is generally credited as the country of the Christmas tree's origin and its first widespread use.

Hessian soldiers in the British Army are said to have decorated their quarters at Trenton, New Jersey, with evergreens to celebrate Christmas in 1776. But it was not until after 1841 that the tree custom took hold in France, England, and America. In that year young Queen Victoria adopted the idea proposed by Albert, her German Prince Consort, and had a tree decorated for their children at Windsor Castle.

JEAN GABERELL

A SKIER GLIDES THROUGH A GROVE OF NATURE-DECORATED "CHRISTMAS TREES" IN THE SWISS ALPS

Ages, Baghdad—capital of modern Iraq—was a center of learning, attracting poets, musicians, philosophers, and doctors from all Islam.

Iraq's conquest by the Mongols in 1258, and by the Turks in 1534, destroyed its culture and extensive irrigation system, but the traditions of its people lived on for a rebirth in the 20th century, when the nation won its independence following World War I.

Today Iraq's government, a constitutional monarchy, is working to raise levels of education and health, in order to prepare its people for the increase in farm lands and the influx of industries hoped for with the completion of its vast hydroelectric program.

NOTE: Iraq is shown on the Society's map of Bible Lands and the Cradle of Western Civilization.

SPECIAL NOTE: See "Ancient Mesopotamia: a Light That Did Not Fail," in the January, 1951, issue of the *National Geographic Magazine*, which includes 24 paintings depicting the entire scope of Mesopotamian civilization.

See also, "Beside the Persian Gulf" (23 color photographs), in the *National Geographic Magazine* for March, 1947; "Mountain Tribes of Iran and Iraq," March, 1946*; "Forty Years Among the Arabs," September, 1942; "Bombs over Bible Lands," August, 1941; "Change Comes to Bible Lands," December, 1938.

MAYNARD OWEN WILLIAMS

IN BAGHDAD, CAPITAL OF IRAQ, SIDEWALK LUNCH COUNTERS TEMPT PASSERS-BY

A well-balanced meal is offered Iraqis for a few cents. The portable restaurant sells eggs, fish, mutton, Arab flapjacks of barley, and many fruits and vegetables.

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